Weekly “Media Traces” Assignment

OVERVIEW
Over the course of the term, you will be working with your classmates to generate a shared set of references in a media library of material that relates to course topics and discussions.

Each week, you will select 1 media item in a media format of your choice, including but not limited to: a recent news article, a blog post, an academic publication, a public social media post, or a podcast, to name a few.

Then, you will add the item as an entry in a shared **Zotero** folder. Zotero is a type of tool called a *reference manager.* Zotero is used by researchers, but also has general utility for saving and organizing a wide variety of media items, citations, and links. Instructions on how we will be using Zotero are below.

Finally, you will write a 150-word minimum written reflection on the media item to critically engage with how it relates to discussions or ideas we’ve discussed or read about in any of the course materials.

We will be bringing your media items into the discussion each week to further relate ideas in the course to our lives and subjects of interest, while collaborating as a team to develop a research library.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
- Hone your skills to detect course themes in everyday media and conversations today
- Develop a greater understanding of how to synthesize media items for qualitative research
- Engage in qualitative data synthesis and management as a research collective

INSTRUCTIONS

ZOTERO
You can add to group Zotero libraries in Zotero’s online portal. You do not need to download anything for this Assignment.

Our class Zotero group is private. Once you have access, you can access it online at: [LINK]

Zotero’s main website is: https://www.zotero.org/
You can read it’s documentation here: https://www.zotero.org/support/
And here’s the Wikipedia page =) : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zotero

I will be demoing how to use Zotero’s online portal during class, and can answer your questions and troubleshoot on an ongoing basis, as needed.

ZOTERO INSTRUCTIONS

Register an account

- In the first week of class, we will all create accounts at zotero.org.
- You should have your account created so you can add your first media item by [DATE] in [Week 2]
- University or non-University emails both work for the purposes of this assignment.
- Confirm your registration through email.

Join the shared class Zotero through e-mail

- An invitation to join the group library will be emailed to you on the first day of class. Check your spam folder if you don't see it, or let me know so we can troubleshoot so you can add entries.

WEEKLY REQUIREMENTS

1 SELECT MEDIA ITEM AND ADD A REFERENCE ENTRY FOR IT TO OUR GROUP ZOTERO LIBRARY

Due: by class-time [DAY TIME TIMEZONE] each week

- Post your media item in the [LINK TO: "class Zotero library"] by [DAY: i.e. "Tuesday's"] class each week starting Week 2.

Instructions:

- Identify and select 1 media item relevant to course topics, specific discussions that we've had in class, or specific ideas found in the readings and other class material we've viewed.

- You may *either:*
    1. Search and identify a media item of interest that relates to course topics. Note: Keep track of your search terms, as this will be useful for you in the "Reflection" portion of the Assignment.

       Or:
    2. Identify a media item organically from/among media you encounter or consume "in the wild" in your daily life that relates to course topics.

       – both options work great.

- Add your media item to the class Zotero folder [LINK]
    - Note: You should be able to drag and drop webpages directly into Zotero to start an entry, or you may "upload" directly and add in metadata (see below).
- Check the metadata of your entry on Zotero. Do your best to cite media items by adding in bibliographic metadata (work title, author name, publication, etc.) and relevant links. Let me know if you have questions on how to cite!

2 SUBMIT A WRITTEN REFLECTION ON THE MEDIA ITEM

Due: DAY TIME TIMEZONE

*Note: I have students turn in the written reflection one day after the media item is submitted

- Email a 150 word (minimum length, more is fine) reflection on each item to [EMAIL OR SUBMIT LINK] by [DATE TIME] each week

Instructions:

- Submit a 150-word minimum written reflection on your chosen media item and how it relates to class themes or ideas we are engaging with in this course.
- The reflection should describe:
  - What the item is,
  - How you found it, and;
  - How it relates to course themes

  - To help describe how you found your item, keep track of and state how you found the media item, such as the platform you found the article on. State your search terms if you used a search engine or searched within a platform such as Twitter or Reddit.
  - Summarize some main points by the authors (get specific).
- Reflect on how the article relates to the [INSERT RELEVANT CLASS TOPIC(S)] and helps us understand course themes and discussions.
- [INSERT ADDITIONAL SUBMIT DETAILS]

MEDIA ITEMS DETAILS

This Assignment takes into account how a wide variety of media items might offer insights as pieces of qualitative data.

Your media items might be sourced from:

- News articles
- Blog posts
- Social media posts/threads
- Photographs or images
- Advertisements/commercials
- Podcasts
- Informational videos or video reports
- Documentaries
- And More!
  - *I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about suitable media items.